

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 /072 W
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P R 231624Z AUG 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1466
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: POLITICAL POTPOURRI

1. AS SEPTEMBER APPROACHES, THE AUGUST DOLDRUMS ARE GIVING WAY TO A GRADUAL RETURN TO "NORMAL" POLITICAL ACTIVITY, WITH ATTENTION CURRENTLY CENTERED ON COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION, MOVEMENT TOWARD THE INSTALLATION OF A PROVISIONAL "GENERALITAT" (REGIONAL GOVT IN CATALONIA), DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE BASQUE PROVINCES, AND REPORTS OF DISSENSION WITHIN FRAGA'S ALIANZA POPULAR (AP).

2. CONSTITUTION DRAFTING. THE CONGRESS SUB-COMMITTEE ("PONENCIA") CHARGED WITH PREPARING THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE
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NEW CONSTITUTION MET AUGUST 22 IN CLOSED SESSION. AFTER THE MEETING, SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN EMILIO ATTARD (UCD) TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE GROUP WOULD MEET THRICE WEEKLY UNTIL THE DRAFT WAS COMPLETED AND PREPARED TO BE PRESENTED TO THE FULL CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE. UNTIL THAT TIME, HE ADDED, THE SUB-COMMITTEE WOULD MAKE NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON ITS PROGRESS.

THE 8-MEMBER "PONENCIA" CONSISTS OF ATTARD AND FELLOW UCD STALWARTS JOSE PEDRO PEREZ LLORCA, MIGUEL HERRERO DE MINON, AND GABRIEL CISNEROS, PSOE NOTABLE GREGORIO PECES BARBA, PCE/PSUC LEADER SOLE TURA, AP CHIEF FRAGA, AND MIGUEL ROCA, OF THE CATALAN PDC, IN REPRESENTATION OF THE BASQUE/CATALAN MINORITY.

3. UCD, PSOE, PCE AND AP MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ARE WORKING FROM UNPUBLISHED DRAFT CONSTITUTIONS PREPARED IN RECENT DAYS BY THEIR RESPECTIVE PARTIES. THESE MAJOR GROUPS CONTINUE TO HOLD THAT THERE ARE NO UNBRIDGEABLE DIFFERENCES DIVIDING THEM, ALTHOUGH THERE CLEARLY ARE DISCREPANCIES ON SUCH ISSUES AS HOW TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTIONS OF THE MONARCHY AND REGIONAL AUTONOMY AND, IN GENERAL, HOW DETAILED A DOCUMENT THE CONSTITUTION SHOULD BE. UCD AND AP PREFER A RELATIVELY LEAN DOCUMENT, WHILE THE PSOE AND PCE ARE PLUMPING FOR A MORE ELABORATE ONE, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE TREATMENT OF PUBLIC AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS, WHERE THEY SUPPORT AS DETAILED A STATEMENT AS POSSIBLE.

4. TWO OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO THE DRAFTING OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND OF PARTICULAR CURRENT INTEREST ARE THOSE OF CORTES DISSOLUTION AND GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TO PARLIAMENT PRIOR TO THE ENTERING INTO EFFECT OF THE NEW DOCUMENT.
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--UCD AND AP CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PARLIAMENT'S CONTINUATION THROUGH ITS FULL ELECTED 4-YEAR TERM, WHILE THE PSOE AND PCE ADVOCATE DISSOLUTION ONCE THE CONSTITUTION-WRITING TASK IS COMPLETED.

--AS FOR GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, THE PSOE CURRENTLY IS PUSHING FOR, AND UCD IS RESISTING, THE IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROVISION FOR "VOTES OF CENSURE" IN THE PARLIAMENT WHICH WOULD PROVIDE A MECHANISM FOR TOPPLING THE GOVT. UNDER THE DEMOCRATIC REFORM LAW APPROVED IN THE DECEMBER 15, 1976 REFERENDUM, THE GOVT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE TO PARLIAMENT, AND UCD, NOT SURPRISINGLY, HOLDS THAT THE REFORM LAW SHOULD GOVERN UNTIL THE NEW CONSTITUTION PROVIDES FOR SUCH GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

5. MOVEMENT ON "GENERALITAT." GENERALITAT PRESIDENT-IN-EXILE JOSEP TARRADELLAS IS IN PARIS WHERE HE REPORTEDLY WILL SOON HOLD A SECOND NEGOTIATING SESSION WITH SUAREZ ADVISOR SANCHEZ TERAN. ALTHOUGH THE FINAL OUTLINE OF AN AGREEMENT ON THE PROVISIONAL REESTABLISHMENT OF THE GENERALITAT REMAINS UNCLEAR, IT IS GENERALLY ANTICIPATED THAT THE CATALAN REGIONAL GOVT WILL BE IN

PLACE BY SEPTEMBER 11, THE CATALAN "DIADA" (DAY OF CATALONIA), ANNIVERSARY OF THE REGION'S LOSS OF ITS POLITICAL SEMI-AUTONOMY TO THE TROOPS OF PHILIP V IN 1714. THE GOVT HOPES THAT THROUGH CONCESSIONS ON THIS ISSUE IT WILL BE ABLE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO CO-OPT THE 13 CENTRIST CATALAN DEPUTIES (11 FROM PUJOL'S PDC AND 2 FROM THE CANELLAS/GUELL COALITION) INTO REINFORCING UCD'S PARLIAMENTARY EDGE.

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6. BASQUES IN THE STREETS. PRO-AMNESTY DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE AGAIN TAKEN TO THE STREETS IN SAN SEBASTIAN (GUIPUZCOA) IN RECENT DAYS, PRIMARILY TO CALL ON THE GOVT TO DROP ITS REQUEST FOR THE EXTRADITION OF ETA FIGURE MIGUEL ANGEL APALATEGUI ("APALA"), WHO CURRENTLY IS BEING HELD BY FRENCH AUTHORITIES IN MARSEILLES. HE IS SUSPECTED OF HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THE KIDNAPPING OF BASQUE INDUSTRIALIST YBARRA, WHICH RESULTED IN THE VICTIM'S MURDER. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN DEMONSTRATORS AND POLICE IN DOWNTOWN SAN SEBASTIAN AND INJURIES, NONE

OF THEM GRAVE, REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN SUSTAINED ON BOTH SIDES. THE PSOE AND PCE HAVE DENOUNCED BOTH THE DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE POLICE'S "OVERREACTION" TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEM, BUT THE BASQUE PNV HAS REMAINED MUTE. ETA'S POLITICAL/MILITARY WING, AFTER WEEKS OF SILENCE, REPORTEDLY HAS NOW ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE THREATENING A RETURN TO "ARMED STRUGGLE" IF THE GOVT DOES NOT DROP ITS EXTRADITION REQUEST. MEANWHILE, "APALA" REPORTEDLY IS WELL INTO A HUNGER STRIKE WHICH HAS LEFT HIM EXTREMELY WEAK.

7. TENSIONS WITHIN AP. ALIANZA POPULAR (AP) NOTABLE AND DEPUTY FROM TOLEDO LICINIO DE LA FUENTE, AFTER A HASTILY-CALLED MEETING LAST NIGHT WITH AP CHIEF FRAGA, ACKNOWLEDGED IN A BRIEF COMMUNIQUE THAT HE IS AT ODDS WITH OTHER PARTY LEADERS AND INTENDS TO STEP DOWN FROM HIS LEADERSHIP POSITION WHILE RETAINING HIS CONGRESS SEAT AND REMAINING WITHIN AP'S PARLIAMENTARY GROUP. THERE ALSO ARE UNCONFIRMED RUMORS THAT ANOTHER AP LEADING LIGHT, UNSUCCESSFUL CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE CURZ MARTINEZ ESTERUELAS, MAY QUIT THE PARTY. (COMMENT: SIGNS OF DISSATISFACTION WITHIN AP ARE HARDLY SURPRISING, GIVEN THE PARTY'S DISAPPOINTING ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE, AND WE EXPECT THEM TO CONTINUE UNTIL AND PERHAPS EVEN AFTER THE PARTY'S PROJECTED AUTUMN CONGRESS RENDERS ACCOUNTS.) STABLER

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